



### About Parades

Parades are a great opportunity to show what you care about, connect with your community, and have fun! Whether you are participating in a parade or planning a Girl Scout event, series, or other large group gathering, it is important to represent Girl Scouts in the best possible way and encourage troop members to plan the festivities.

**Include Girl Scout Members with Disabilities.** Talk to Girl Scout members with disabilities and their caregivers. Ask about needs and accommodations. Always be sure to contact the location and/or the instructor in advance to ensure they are able to accommodate those with

disabilities.

**Equity.** Many parades are held to mark holidays. Note that holidays in the U.S. have different meanings to different communities based on history, culture, and religion. Encourage conversation around what the particular holiday means to the group, and respect all opinions. Consider these factors and past experiences of the Girl Scout members in your troop that could affect their ability to equally participate in an activity. Work with members and families to understand how an activity is perceived. Ensure that all Girl Scout members and their families feel comfortable and have access to whatever is needed to fully participate, such as proper equipment, prior experiences, and the skills needed to enjoy the activity.

**Emergency Action Plan (EAP).** Review and document your Emergency Action Plan (EAP) before starting any activity and review it so all are prepared. Think through scenarios of what can go wrong such as an accident, physical injury, missing person, sudden illness, or sudden weather or water emergencies.

### Parades and Other Large Gathering Checkpoints

**Respect parade and large group gathering standards.** Local regulations and permit procedures are observed for public gatherings, facility use, food handling, certificates of insurance, and sales or excise tax. Guidelines for personal protection are observed. Local authorities are contacted for safety and security suggestions and assistance applicable to the parade or event. For safety reasons, name tags or other personal identification are not worn in public places. GSUSA and council guidelines on publicity, photo releases, and interviews are observed.

**Select a safe location.** The location for any community event, large group gathering, or parade is inspected in advance, with consideration for the following, as appropriate:

- Accessibility to the group and to the public
- Suitability to event size, age groups, and kinds of activities
- Parking availability
- Availability of restrooms
- Security arrangements, including availability of police protection
- Lighting for evening and indoor events
- Vulnerability to inclement weather

- Proximity to medical facilities
- Fire safety, which includes not exceeding the occupancy limits for indoor activities or events; sufficient emergency exits, which are well marked and operational; and having an emergency evacuation plan in place
- A food-preparation area used for large groups of people meets state and local standards and includes sufficient potable water and restrooms for participants
- Provisions are made for garbage removal and site cleanup

**Consider the following:**

- Need, interest, and readiness of the group
- The sponsor of the event or activity
- The needs of the community to be served
- Scheduling issues
- GSUSA and council guidelines on fundraising, endorsements, collaborating with other organizations, and maintaining nonprofit status

**Make appropriate plans for parade floats.** Floats drawn by trucks and automobiles must be covered by automobile insurance in the name of the vehicle owners. Float construction is safe, using non-toxic or flame-retardant materials, and secured to the body of the float and the vehicle. Floats are equipped with portable ABC fire extinguishers. Drivers must follow the [Transporting Girl Scouts SAC](#).

**Identify a place to meet in case of separation** from the supervising adult or the group.

**No leaning over the edges; legs and arms do not hang outside of the float.** When sitting on a moving float, remain securely seated with no legs dangling over the side.

**Riders on floats have secure seating, or a secure handhold or safety harness is used if standing.** Floats are not overcrowded. Participants do not walk close to moving floats. An adult accompanies youth on any moving float.

**Any coupling of a trailer to a vehicle is appropriate to the load and has a safety chain. Evaluate the float/trailer.** Ensure that the wagon has sturdy steps and handrails for easy loading and unloading of passengers. The wagon should have railings and seating. The cab walls should be three to four feet high.

**Nothing is distributed to onlookers from a moving vehicle or a float.**

**Prepare for emergencies.** Ensure the presence of a first aid kit. Troops must provide one adult certified in Adult and Pediatric CPR/First Aid/AED, who is prepared for cases of abrasions, sprains, and fractures. Emergency transportation is available; if any part of the activity is located 30 minutes or more from emergency medical services, ensure the presence of a first aider and plan for emergency medical routes; consider heavily trafficked routes depending on the day and time.

**Take safety precautions.** Instruction is given on safe pedestrian practices, when applicable. Adults must know where youth are, always. Advance arrangements are made for picking up the Girl Scouts after the event, and parents and participants understand the arrangements.

**Gear for Parades and Other Large Group Gatherings**

- Girl Scout uniform, pin, or some other means of group identification
- Comfortable walking shoes

**Additional Recommended Gear**

- Sunscreen (SPF of at least 15) and lip balm
- Sunglasses
- Reusable water bottle and water for filling bottles